

We claim:

1. In a computerized accounting system, in which rows of a financial report generated by the accounting system are defined by a user-configurable chart template, a method of creating the chart template comprising the steps of:
 - 5 displaying a visual representation of the chart template via a user interface, the visual representation corresponding to at least one section of the financial report;

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receiving an input for a header/total pair for insertion into the at least one section of the financial report, the header/total pair defining a header row and a corresponding total row for inclusion in the financial report;

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receiving an input for a detail line associated with the header/total pair;
and

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associating a rule with the detail line, the rule defining which accounts of the accounting system are to be listed between the header row and the corresponding total row of the financial report.

2. The method of claim 1 further comprising assigning an account category to the header/total pair.

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3. The method of claim 2 further comprising assigning an account category to each account in the accounting system and wherein the rule requires that all accounts associated with the detail line be of the account category of the associated header/total pair.

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4. The method of claim 1 further comprising presenting a list of acceptable account categories assignable to the header/total pair based on the at least one section.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising assigning a level to the header/total pair.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the level determines the indentation of the header and total rows in the financial report.

7. The method of claim 5 wherein the level selectively determines whether the header
5 and total rows are displayed in the financial report.

8. The method of claim 5 further comprising assigning a level to the header/total pair and a level to the detail line, wherein the level of the detail line is greater than the level of the header/total pair.

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9. The method of claim 1 wherein each account in the accounting system includes an account code and wherein the rule associated with the detail line is based on a range of account codes.

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10. The method of claim 9 wherein the range of account codes is a subset of a range of permissible account codes associated with an account category of the corresponding header/total pair.

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11. The method of claim 1 wherein the rule associated with the detail line is based on a filter of account criteria.

12. The method of claim 1 further comprising displaying a visual representation of the chart template wherein the detail line is replaced by a list of all accounts associated with the detail line by the rule.

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13. The method of claim 1 wherein the section is a balance sheet.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the section is an income statement.

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15. The method of claim 1 wherein the input for the header/total pair includes a caption for the header row.

16. In a computerized accounting system with access to a database of accounts, each account having account data associated therewith, the account data including account name and account financial information, a method of generating a financial report comprising the steps of:

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displaying a user-configurable chart template to a user of the system via a user-interface;

10 receiving inputs into the chart template, each input defining a respective detail line;

associating a rule with each detail line of the chart template, each respective rule defining a subset of accounts to be grouped together in the financial report;

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retrieving from the database account data for each account associated with the detail lines of the chart template;

20 merging the retrieved account data into the financial report, the financial report having columns for account name and account financial information, the rows of information in the financial report grouped according to the detail lines of the chart template, and

presenting the financial report to the user.

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17. The method of claim 16 wherein, when displaying the user-configurable chart template to the user, the chart template is initially blank.

30 18. The method of claim 16 wherein, when displaying the user-configurable chart template to the user, the chart template already includes at least one pre-defined detail line.

19. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of validating the chart template to identify any accounts in the database not associated with at least one detail line of the chart template.

20. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of validating the chart template to identify any accounts in the database associated with more than one detail line of the chart template.

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21. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of receiving further inputs into the chart template, each further input defining header rows and total rows for inclusion in the financial report.

10 22. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of receiving further inputs into the chart template, each further input defining a header/total pairs, and wherein each respective detail line is associated with one of the header/total pairs.

15 23. The method of claim 22 further comprising the step of assigning an account category to each respective header/total pair.

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising assigning an account category to each account in the database and wherein the rule associated with each respective detail line requires that all accounts associated with the respective detail line be of the account category
20 of the associated header/total pair.

25. The method of claim 22 further comprising assigning a level to each respective header/total pair and each respective detail line.

25 26. The method of claim 25 wherein each header/total pair defines a respective header row and a respective corresponding total row for inclusion in the financial report, and wherein the level determines the indentation of each respective header and total row in the financial report.

30 27. The method of claim 25 wherein the level selectively determines whether each respective header and total rows are displayed in the financial report.

28. The method of claim 27 wherein the user determines up to what level the financial report includes.

29. The method of claim 25 wherein the level determines the indentation of the account names of each accounts associated with a respective detail line.
- 5 30. The method of claim 25 wherein the level selectively determines whether accounts associated with each respective detail line are displayed in the financial report.
- 10 31. The method of claim 16 wherein each account in the database includes an account code and wherein the rule associated with each respective detail line is based on a range of account codes.
32. The method of claim 16 wherein the rule associated with each respective detail line is based on a filter of account criteria.
- 15 33. The method of claim 16 further comprising receiving a request from the user for generation of the financial report.
34. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of presenting the user with a list of available financial reports.
- 20 35. The method of claim 16 wherein funds are defined in the accounting system and wherein the rows of information in the financial report are further sorted by such funds.
- 25 36. The method of claim 16 wherein the step of presenting the financial report comprises displaying the financial report on a computer screen.
37. The method of claim 16 wherein the step of presenting the financial report comprises printing the financial report.
- 30 38. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of presenting the user with a list of available financial reports.
39. The method of claim 16 further comprising the step of saving the chart template.

40. The method of claim 16 further comprising displaying a visual representation of the chart template wherein each respective detail line is replaced by a list of all accounts associated by the rule of the respective detail line.
- 5 41. The method of claim 16 wherein the chart template corresponds to a section of the financial report.
42. The method of claim 41 wherein the section is a balance sheet.
- 10 43. The method of claim 42 wherein each detail line has an associated account category and wherein the account category of each detail line in the balance sheet section of the chart template is one or more of the group of assets, liabilities, and net assets.
44. The method of claim 41 wherein the section is an income statement.
- 15 45. The method of claim 44 wherein each detail line has an associated account category and wherein the account category of each detail line in the income statement section of the chart template is one or more of the group of revenue, expense, gift, transfer, gain, and loss.

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